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WORKPLACE CHILD CARE:
A BACKGROUND PAPER



Women's Bureau
Ontario Ministry of Labour
January 20, 1981



Ontario

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WORKPLACE CHILD CARE

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A: INTRODUCTION

- This paper examines existing information on workplace child care. Workplace child care is defined as any involvement of employers or unions in the provision of child care for employees. Such involvement can encompass a broad range of activities, outlined in detail under section D. Guidelines for Employers and Unions. It may take the form of: child care centres at or nearby the place of work, wholly or partially subsidized by the employer or union; employer-offered or union-negotiated family benefits such as child care allowances, paid by the employer to employees with children; or, counselling-referral services set up by employers to provide information, support, and guidance to working parents in need of child care services and facilities.

Throughout this paper, the terms "industrial child care", "employer-related child care", "employer-sponsored child care", "employer-subsidized child care", and "workplace child care" are used synonymously. Since the term "child care" suggests a wider range of services than does "day care", it is therefore used, wherever possible.

Because aspects of child care cannot properly be understood out of the context of the history from which they arose and the overall child care policies and systems within which they operate, this paper begins with a brief overview of the history of child care and a short description of the general policies and present situation with regard to the Canadian child care system.

The first creches were set up in France in the late 18th century to allow women to work in the developing textile industry. In 19th century England, poor women working in mills and factories were forced to leave their children under often unreliable supervision and infant mortality soared. Philanthropic and charitable organizations as well as the wives of mill owners began to operate nurseries for the care of these children. Similarly, in Canada, the establishment of creches and nurseries in the late 19th and early 20th centuries freed poor women for the performance of menial and domestic jobs. These creches were offered as charity but often charged a fee.

During World War II women were needed in the labour force to work in war and other related industries. Since many of these women had children, both Canada and the United States enacted legislation to set up nurseries and provide child care while the mothers worked.

One of the most famous of these was the child care facility established by Kaiser Shipyards in Portland, Oregon. With initial funds from the U.S. Maritime Commission, two child care centres were set up at the gates of the shipyards. The comprehensive, quality programs offered by the centres were planned by the most qualified early childhood educators available. The centres were open 24 hours a day, every day, for preschoolers 18 months and over and for school children on holidays. Operating costs were shared by the company and the parents. Facilities were available for children mildly ill who required rest and nursing care, kitchens were set up to provide dinners for working mothers to take home at the end of a shift, mending and shopping were done by the centre, and counselling for all types of problems was available.

In Canada, a Dominion-Provincial agreement set up the War Time Day Nurseries Act, which split operating and capital costs evenly between the two levels of government. In 1946, the federally-sponsored day care centres closed. In response to public pressure, however, Ontario decided to keep a number of the 19 established centres open. Under a new Day Nurseries Act, it assumed the responsibility for day care centres on a cost-sharing basis with the municipalities.

Today, all three levels of government in Canada are involved in child care. Under the Canada Assistance Plan, the federal government pays 50% of operating costs, the province pays 30%, and the municipality 20%. Quotas are set by municipal governments as to the number of spaces they will subsidize for low income families. Capital costs of constructing new centres are split between the provincial and municipal governments on the basis of 50% each. Capital costs for the renovation of buildings are split 80% provincial and 20% municipal. The province can then recoup depreciation on capital expenditures from the federal government through the current cost-sharing mechanism.

Although child care has always provided a service to employers and thus benefitted the economy, it is generally perceived as a service to the working mother for which she is expected to pay. Howard Clifford, in "An Overview of Canadian Day Care Services", says:

"Our economy, based on ever-increasing consumption, depends on both the participation of women in the labour force and their buying power. If a society depends on working women it must take the responsibility for making it possible for mothers to work without reducing the quality and strength of their family life". 1

Clifford asks for the acceptance of child care as a public utility.

As increasing numbers of women enter the workforce, the need for child care has become critical. According to Statistics Canada, in 1979 there were 261,000 women in the Ontario labour force who had at least one child under 6 years of age. In 1973, only 166,000 women with children under 6 were working for pay. The participation rate of Ontario women with children under 6 was 49% in 1979. In other words, one of every two mothers of young children is now in the labour force and presumably requires some form of childcare.

It is within the context of the above that industrial child care will be examined.

B: WORKPLACE CHILD CARE IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

1. Introduction

Below is a brief examination of industrial child care in other jurisdictions. Information is, in most instances, scanty and often quite old. There seems to be a consensus in the literature that for older children, community based care is preferable. Transportation problems and the development of friendships and bonds within the neighbourhood community are stated as reasons for this. However, the existence of workplace day care in the countries below would seem to indicate a real need for this type of child care. Workplace nurseries appear to be particularly logical and convenient for infants and younger children.

2. Countries other than the United States

In Britain, there are seventy-four nurseries attached to factories or workplaces, for the children of employees.² These are for the most part subsidized by the companies and were established because of staff shortages. They serve women employees with children who wish to continue working, but cannot find suitable local child care facilities.

Firms providing day care tend to believe it helpful in reducing labour turnover and in encouraging employee loyalty. The evidence also suggests that companies which have initiated such centres tend to retain them.³ Some unexpected benefits seem to be: good publicity, the ability to assist welfare authorities with some family problems and thereby project the image of a good employer, and a general help to recruitment. Companies feel they can attract additional staff of high calibre through the relatives of well-satisfied mothers.⁴

A potential increase in the number of nurseries and creches provided by places of work in Britain has been predicted since pressure for such services is being applied by such groups as the civil service and universities. One survey of company day nurseries found that while both employers and trade unions had reservations about expanding their nurseries (particularly lest mothers feel tied to an employer for a nursery place), they accepted that, in the face of the general lack of facilities, expansion was desirable.⁵

The 1978 Trades Union Congress Charter on Facilities for the Under-Fives, while divided on the merits of workplace nurseries, agreed that reforms of childminding and playgroups were urgent. It suggested, as a possible short-term measure, the opening of more workplace nurseries, established "on a basis which ensures joint union/parent/employer control and full local authority involvement, plus collectively agreed sufficient safeguards to protect the legitimate interests of the workforce. Loss of employment should not be sufficient cause to force the removal of a child from a nursery".

In China, nursery rooms for babies, nurseries for infants eighteen months to three years, and kindergartens for children three to seven are run by neighbourhood organizations, factories, shops, or communes on a daily, weekly or seasonal basis. In general, nurseries are located at the site of employment while kindergartens are located in the neighbourhoods where people live. Most factories have a nursing room and a nursery-kindergarten. Nursing mothers are given two thirty minute breaks in every eight hour shift to nurse their babies. Places of employment pay a sum equal to 5.5% of their annual payroll into a fund which covers welfare costs. This fund is used to run canteens, creches, kindergartens, bath houses and barber shops and to subsidize workers' housing rent and other welfare expenditures.

Cuba spends a higher percentage of its gross national product on day care than any other country in the world. Free day care is provided for children from the ages of forty-five days to five years. Day care centres operate on what is known as a "padrino" or godfather system. A cooperative arrangement is made between institutions and schools whereby a neighbouring factory might "adopt" a centre, with workers volunteering time to help with transportation, construction, and repairs. This is seen to promote greater contact between adults and children and to provide male and female worker models.

In Denmark, day care centres are established by private groups or townships after the need for such centres has been established by the local Child and Youth Committee. The ownership and operation of day care centres

is rarely in the hands of individuals but functions through non-profit, non-governmental organizations such as trade unions, lodges, voluntary organizations and local citizens' groups.

There are a few industrially located centres and in these cases, the fees normally charged to parents are covered by the industry.

In Eastern Europe, industry is stateowned and child care provided by the state. In Czechoslovakia, 90% of creches are located in residential neighbourhoods while the remainder are in or near factories. In Poland, nursery schools and creches are run by large factories and offices for the children of their employees. They are built and equipped from funds provided by the factory or office and come under the supervision of the state. In Hungary, creches are established by factories, city authorities and other employment groups. In 1972, those founded by factories and other employment groups accounted for some 26.5% of all creches. The budgets of the factory-maintained creches and preschools are met by the discretionary funds of the factory which cover any special welfare and cultural programs. The creches are generally located inside the factory premises. Parents pay a certain part of food costs, according to their income.

In France, creches for children from two months to three years are maintained by industrial firms. These are in addition to those operated by the government, philanthropic organizations, and individuals. Nursery schools open and close according to the working hours of the factories in the vicinity.

In Germany, (Federal Republic) there are a few day care centres which are operated by industries. At some industrial centres in Germany, Belgium and Switzerland, fees for day care are paid or supplemented by "Gewerkschaften" (unions) or trade organizations, according to individual agreements.

In Israel, there are a number of work-connected day care centres established in cooperation with unions, management and the Ministry of Labour. These are located at, or nearby, places of work.

In Italy, there is some evidence that a number of day care centres are being operated by industries although no more specific information is available as to numbers and type of care.

In Japan, industry-sponsored child care programs began to be established in the early 1960's, in response to increased demands for women workers. Some of these centres were sponsored by trade unions or employees' mutual aid cooperatives and some by an industry and a trade union. Several local governments now cover a portion of the cost of these centres.

In New Zealand, there are factory nurseries which operate on a full-time basis. No detail is available on these facilities.

In the Soviet Union, child care is provided by the state. Capital expenses for day care centres are generally subsidized by the state and operational expenses are covered by the sponsor. The sponsor may be a factory, a cooperative, or a community. Individual government ministries provide child care facilities for their employees. Centres are located both at the place of employment and within the community. Nurseries provided at the place of work seem particularly useful and advantageous to nursing mothers who are given time off to nurse their infants and to play with them.

Nurseries and preschools invite nearby factories or business to assume patronage over their children. Representatives from the patron institution visit the children and make toys for them and in turn, invite the children to tour their place of work.

In Sweden, funds for day care services come from three sources: one-third from government, one-third from the employer through a payroll tax, and one-third from parental fees. The onus is on municipalities to initiate day care and although most centres are run by local authorities, they may come under the jurisdiction of companies or various associations.

In Switzerland, day nurseries are sometimes supported by factories which employ a large number of mothers. Cantonal legislation requires that all employed persons receive a children's allowance, paid by the employer.

This rather small sum (i.e. 20-45 Swiss francs in 1973) is paid to the father if both parents work and is provided for children born in or out of marriage, adopted, and foster children

3. The United States *

(i) Programs

In the United States, a number of hospitals, federal agencies, companies and unions provide workplace child care for their employees.

Hospitals providing child care centres do so in order to recruit personnel and reduce absenteeism and labour turnover. Part-time workers in these institutions are able to work more hours per day and more days per week. Most of these centres are on hospital grounds, in a building other than the hospital, and most charge a fee. All are subsidized in some way by the hospitals.

Some hospitals have experimented successfully with alternatives to providing centre care. These alternatives include: payment of salaries which allow mothers to take advantage of existing facilities, payment of a higher shift differential for evening and night shifts, and arrangements with local day care centres to pay a portion of the costs of child care.

A number of child care centres have been developed for the use of employees of the Federal Government. All such centres are given continuing government support through the provision of space and other operating costs such as maintenance and utilities. (The availability of free or inexpensive space is a crucial ingredient in the establishment of a day care centre although most centres eventually assume independence as parent-controlled operations.) This is seen as a demonstration of federal agency support and acts as "an incentive to other employee organizations and the unions to lend their financial assistance"⁶ to such projects.

Federal agency involvement in day care is experimental, research, or employee-benefit related. In some cases day care centres have been used as an aid in recruiting prospective employees from inner city poverty areas. The resulting increased employability of minorities and women has

* Following completion of this paper, a new report Child Care Centres Sponsored by Employers and Unions in the United States was received from the U.S. Women's Bureau. It is summarized in Appendix A.

assisted the government in meeting affirmative action goals and thus provided a strong case for federal involvement in child care for its own employees. Such benefits are in addition to improved job performance due to reduced anxiety of parents concerning inadequate child care arrangements, improved attendance, and improved employee retention. In general, the establishment of child care centres for federal employees has been found to be both economically and administratively feasible.⁷

Certain American companies and businesses have also become involved in providing child care centres for their employees. The Curlee Clothing Company of Mayfield, Kentucky has been operating a day care centre since 1935. The cost of this centre is entirely subsidized by the company. It provides spaces for forty-five children of employees, between the ages of two and six years. Other companies, such as Rochester Clothes Incorporated of New Bedford, Massachusetts and the Vanderbilt Shirt Company of North Carolina began operating their centres in the late 1960's. Although fees are charged, initial costs were entirely subsidized by the companies involved. It is felt that benefits are returned to the employers in terms of reduced turnover, reduced absenteeism, and recruitment of new employees. A number of employers, for example the Ford Foundation, subsidize their low income employees who use day care services. In some instances, companies providing day care centres may open these services to the surrounding community as well as to their own employees, in which case, they may qualify for Federal aid. Stride Rite is one such company which has been operating its centre since 1971.

Control Data Corporation of Minneapolis formed a consortium of six companies in order to establish a day care centre in 1971. The centre, Northside Child Development Centre, is open to children of residents of the community and to children of employees of participating firms. Seventy-five percent of its initial funds came from various levels of government and 25% came from the consortium of businesses. The centre received continued business contributions and Federal, State, and County funding. It is run by a board consisting of parents and community representatives. Fees are charged according to the income of the parents, the number of children attending the centre, and the age of the child.

The KLH Corporation of Cambridge, Massachusetts established a day care centre in 1968 for the children of its employees and those of the neighbourhood surrounding the plant. It began its operation as a non-profit service, separate from the corporation, receiving the grants from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare , KLH, and private individuals. KLH continues to subsidize 20% of the operating costs and to donate additional services estimated at approximately \$6,000. KLH has completely transferred ownership of the centre to a non-profit group.

Both the Northside Development Centre and the KLH centre are successful examples of corporate/community centres, supported jointly by parents, employers, and community organizations. From the onset, the KLH centre was seen as a constructive outlet for business in the development of the community and as a unique opportunity for the corporation to become involved in the local community.

American unions have also begun operating day care centres. Notable among these are the six centres operated by the Regional Joint Boards of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America in the Chicago and Baltimore areas. Employer contributions to the union health and welfare fund (a tax deductible 2% of the gross payroll) are used to support the day care centres. In some cases a small fee is charged. These day care centres are completely administered by the union and are open to children of union members and to the surrounding community.

(ii) Discussion

The majority of existing employer-subsidized child care programs in the United States are concentrated in industries with a high percentage of young female production workers and traditionally high absenteeism rates. Such companies find the operation of their day care centres economically viable. One study recommends that only companies with three characteristics should subsidize their own day care centres. These characteristics are all economic and include a large labour force, located in one geographical area and containing about 1000 female employees; a substantiated need for additional female employees in order to utilize the recruiting value of

day care; and above average turnover and absenteeism costs.⁸

Donald U. Honicky of Ohio Bell Telephone, involved in the establishment of a day care centre for the use of Bell's employees, made the following statement:

"We want to be sure...that we're at least not harming the children. A positive effect on the children is a nice fringe benefit. But let me restate that the whole purpose of these programs is to determine whether industrial child care saves us money in the areas of hiring, training, absenteeism, tardiness and attitude."⁹

As one of the "economies" associated with the large-scale operation of day care centres, one study mentions that "increasing enrolment from 60 to 100 children would reduce the cost per child by approximately 7-10%."¹⁰

Such statements have alarmed the child care community. Where money and profit are the prime concerns in setting up day care centres, they fear that the quality of the child care provided will suffer. Good, developmental programs are costly. The likelihood of the cutting of costs at the expense of quality can be offset by the establishment of boards of directors composed of parents and child care workers responsible for setting policies and deciding programs.

The only survey found in this area stated that, most companies sponsoring child care centres on the basis of there being a cost-benefit ratio in terms of absenteeism and turnover will probably not find that the strictly economic returns justify the continuing subsidy of the centre.¹¹ The survey and cost-benefit analysis of existing employer-subsidized child care programs in the U.S. revealed "no empirical evidence that day care subsidies reduce turnover and absenteeism...nevertheless, managers of all employer-subsidized programs we interviewed intuitively believe they produce savings that are commensurate with their cost to the company." The study concluded that "except under unusual circumstances, savings from employee turnover and absenteeism are likely to be relatively small" but "on the other hand, the recruiting value of subsidized day care may be appreciable." Individual reports from employers, noted elsewhere in this report seem to perhaps negate the findings of the survey concerning

turnover and absenteeism. There seems to be a better argument for employer support of child care in terms of enlightened self-interest, and corporate responsibility. The president of Stride Rite, which operates a day care centre for the children of employees and those of the surrounding community, has this to say of his centre:

"This shouldn't be construed as do-gooderism or tokenism because it's really self-serving. There's a need for corporate management to begin to appreciate the economics of something like quality day care. Fifteen percent of American households are below the poverty line, and if business can get them contributing to the gross national product, business will benefit." 12

In summary, there appears to be a heavy emphasis on the cost-benefit aspect of workplace child care in the United States. In those instances where employers and communities have joined together to sponsor child care centres, the monetary emphasis seems less pronounced and the programs more successful. Perhaps the acknowledgement, on the part of business and industry, of the necessity for some sort of community responsibility, accounts for this. Recognition of corporate social responsibility and insistence on parental involvement and control of program policy are factors which can offset some of the dangers inherent in company-sponsored child care centres and ensure quality care for children.

C: WORKPLACE CHILD CARE IN CANADA

A number of employer-related child care centres operate across Canada. A variety of centres are described below and places which provide or are planning to provide centres are listed. From the information that is available, it would appear that there is a growing interest in this type of child care. Centres or alternative employer-sponsored child care provisions in Ontario are described separately.

The existence of child care centres such as the Health Sciences Centre Day Nursery in Winnipeg and the Hester Howe Day Care Centre at Toronto's City Hall, is evidence of the need for and the popularity of workplace child care. A study, conducted by the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto in 1977,¹³ indicated that 15% of the parents surveyed wanted day care at the workplace. This represented a significant increase over previous years. Dr. Johnson, who authored the study, reports that the number of telephone calls she has received from both the public and the media concerning employer-sponsored child care, may indicate an even greater interest.

1. Provinces other than Ontario

The British Columbia Government Employee's Day Care Centre in Victoria, B.C. opened in 1971 with a \$4,000 grant from the funds of the Victoria branch of the government employees union. The building was renovated by volunteer union labour. The union is no longer involved in the centre and spaces are now available on a first come, first served basis, with no priority for government employees. There are currently 24 children enrolled.

The Health Sciences Centre Day Nursery opened in Winnipeg, Manitoba in November, 1975 for the children of the Health Sciences Centre staff and students. A survey conducted prior to the opening, indicated that at least 100 children were in immediate need of child care. One-half of these were infants. Space for 80 children, 20 infants and 60 two-to-five year olds, was acquired in a public school near the hospital complex. The Manitoba government provided initial funds of approximately \$60,000 in the form of maintenance grants per child. The centre has now taken over the

entire public school in which it was originally housed. One hundred and thirty children are enrolled in the program; twenty of these are infants. Approximately one hundred and fifty children are on the waiting list. There are 24 staff members.

The day nursery operates as a separate department of the Health Sciences Centre with the director responsible to the hospital president. A sub-committee composed of the director, 5 parents, members of the Health Sciences board and administration, makes recommendations to the hospital board concerning policy. In practice, the day nursery is autonomous.

The day nursery overspends its budget in the range of \$17,000 to \$20,000 per fiscal period. The hospital accepts this and picks up the deficit. Costs are offset by special projects established under the Canada Works grants. In 1977/78, a demonstration project for abused children and their parents was set up. In 1978/79 the nursery provided emergency care for children whose parents were in the hospital.

The Pinocchio Day Care Centre in Edmonton, began operating in January 1979, in the Sun Life Building. When the building was erected it was stipulated that a certain amount of space must be leased to a day care centre. The centre is privately run. Because it was unable to attain financial viability in its first year, Sun Life has taken over its operation and will cover the deficits incurred until such time as it is financially stable. When the centre is fully set up and financially viable, the present director intends to form a company and buy it from Sun Life.

Sixty children are currently enrolled in the program. Fifty percent of the parents of those children work in the Sun Life Building. There are 6 full-time staff.

Other workplace child care centres in Canada include the Hospital Riviere-des-prairies Garderie in Montreal, the Faro Child Care Cooperative in Faro (Yukon), the University Hospital of Alberta centre in Edmonton and the Ste.

Anne Nackawic Preschool in New Brunswick.

Some employers and unions are currently studying the feasibility of providing child care facilities. These include the Service, Office and Retail Workers Union of Canada (British Columbia), The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (British Columbia), Foothills Pipe Lines Limited (Alberta), Pacific Western Airlines (British Columbia) and the Cooperators (Saskatchewan)

2. Ontario

A number of workplace child care centres and employer-related child care arrangements exist in Ontario. Some of these are listed below with a brief description of their origins and present status.

Riverdale Hospital in Toronto, set up a day care centre for its employees in 1964. There was a shortage of nursing staff at the time and it was felt that a centre might aid in the recruitment of personnel and the stabilization of staff. At present, the centre is used primarily by the ward staff and appears to be a permanent fixture at the hospital. The administration feels that the provision of such a service for its employees is part of the hospital philosophy.

The centre operates at a deficit in the area of \$15,000 - \$20,000 per year. This is subsidized by the hospital which also provides laundry, cafeteria, maintenance, and carpentry services. It is located in an older building in isolation from the rest of the hospital and is not open to the community. It can serve 40 children between the ages of 3 months and 5 years, although enrolment generally averages 20 children. There are 5 permanent staff and a fee is charged.

The Orde Street Public School Day Care Centre opened in September 1979, with a donation of \$4,000 from the Toronto Board of Education. The Board is underwriting early expenses and will cover any initial deficit costs. Five locals from the Ontario Teachers Federation each donated \$250. In line with Board policy, space was provided rent-free for the first four months of operation. Parents and staff are considering approaching employers located

in the area, whose employees have enrolled their children in the centre for additional funds. Priority is given to children of Board of Education employees, the community, and those who work in the area. There are 30 preschool children between the ages of 2 and 5 and 10 school-age children enrolled in the program. The centre has a capacity of 30 preschoolers and 20 school age children. There are full-time and 2 part-time staff.

The staff is finding that many parents are spending lunch and other free time with their children at the centre, to the benefit of staff, parents, and children.

The Hester Howe Day Care Centre opened at City Hall in Toronto in July 1980. It provides spaces for 50 children. Twenty of these spaces are for infants and the remaining 30 for children between 2 and 5 years. 8 staff, 1 assistant supervisor and a director have been hired.

The City is providing space and maintenance in perpetuity and has set aside \$86,000 for the centre. Renovations cost \$76,000 and the rest of the money has gone toward equipment. The City has also provided ongoing funds of \$20,000 to cover half-year operating costs and it is hoped that the Metropolitan government will match these funds. There will be 5 to 10 subsidized spaces. Priority will be given to municipal employees, the press gallery and people working in the provincial offices located at City Hall. Fees are \$60 a week for parents who work for the city and \$75 a week for others.

The Board of Directors is comprised of 6 parents, 3 staff, 1 Metro representative, 1 City representative, 1 representative from CUPE Local 43 and 79, and 1 representative from COTAPSA (the management association)

Initial response from parents wishing to use the centre has been great. Those involved in the planning and setting up of the Hester Howe centre are preparing an information package on how to establish up a day care centre at the workplace and how best to negotiate for such a centre.

The Ontario Government hired a day care consultant for its employees in 1976. It was believed that a day care centre at Queen's Park would meet

only a small portion of the child care needs of Ontario Government employees, whereas a day care counsellor could assist most families.

The day care counsellor maintains an up-to-date register of day care spaces available throughout the province. These include both private day care homes and day care centres. Information concerning available child care, reading material, advice and tips for parents is provided. After a discussion of the family's child care priorities, suggestions, not recommendations, are made. Follow-up is conducted both with the parents and the child care providers.

The day care counsellor initially travelled the province making note of available day care centres and private home day care providers and seeking out new ones. She maintains constant liaison with day care consultants from the Ministry of Community and Social Services and municipal day care co-ordinators.

The day care counsellor works with the private home day care providers: she shows them films, supplies a provider's kit, and conducts a training program or "awareness seminar" once a month with handouts and speakers and lectures on such topics as safety, nutrition, health, creative play, and discipline. She also travels to cities and town across the province, giving presentations on available child care services.

Manulife in Toronto, conducted a comprehensive study on the child care needs of its employees in 1973 and concluded that sufficient child care resources existed in the immediate community. When, in 1976, a task force studying the status of women within the company concluded that day care was an important issue the company decided to establish a program using a day care centre in the vicinity. It met with a number of other companies in the area who rejected the idea, believing that employees would spend too much time with their children and not at work, that parents prefer child care within the community, and that parents prefer individualized care for very young children.

Manulife decided to go ahead with some provision for its own employees. This

took the form of a \$12,000 grant to the Hilda Roberts Day Care Centre on Dundonald Street. The money went toward the renovation of the centre for infants. In return for this donation, Manulife employees were given priority at the centre. The arrangement was finalized in October 1979.

The Hilda Roberts Centre has space for 56 children. Six of these are used by Manulife employees and 8 more employees are on the centre's waiting list. The centre employs 9 staff, excluding caretakers.

In June 1976 CUPE Local 2189 at the YWCA successfully negotiated a taxable benefit of \$15 per month to be used by employees toward child care. It was felt that since the YWCA is an organization whose employees live all over Metropolitan Toronto and work in different locations, it made more sense to negotiate a cash supplement which could be used to support child care within the community rather than to establish a day care centre. Transportation problems would thus be minimized and if an employee changed jobs, it would be necessary to change child care arrangements. The supplement was seen as a token measure, a principle, and "a step in the right direction".

Recently, the clause has been renegotiated to \$25 per month and the age of the "child" extended to 9 years old. The clause comes under "Provisions for Families" and reads:

"The employer shall pay to each employee who has one or more children under the age of nine a total of \$25 each month to help defray the cost of child care. These sums shall be added to the employee's monthly pay."

Another clause states that nothing in this provision "shall allow the employer to discriminate against job applicants because of the number of dependents they may have".

The Canada Life Assurance Company keeps a list of available day care services posted in personnel for the perusal of its employees.

A number of businesses are in the process of researching or planning a child care centre for their employees.

The Wiener Electric Company in Toronto has considered setting up a day care centre. It would be operated separately from the company by private individuals, although the company is prepared to put money into the centre in terms of subsidy of initial costs and provision of space and some services such as that of the company cafeteria. The company sees the day care as an employee benefit or service, that would minimize training costs and stabilize the work force. There are no immediate plans to open a centre unless the company moves to new premises.

A manufacturing company in Rexdale, which does packaging for the automotive industry, had investigated opening a day care centre for its employees. Other industries in the area were approached and the centre was also to serve the community. The company was to provide capital costs and some sort of subsidy to its own employees. The day care centre was to be located in or within 5 minutes of the plant, and be for both infants and children under 6 years of age. Recent layoffs due to the slowdown in the automotive industry have prevented this centre from opening. Although the company had obtained architectural plans for the centre, the staff layoffs make a centre no longer feasible in the foreseeable future.

The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto has considered establishing a centre for the use of its employees. A feasibility study and cost assessment have been completed and submitted to the Hospital Board. The cost assessment indicated that the centre would operate at a deficit. In initial discussions, it was indicated that the hospital would provide food, maintenance and laundry services. Parent's fees would cover operating costs. A decision on the centre is due early in 1981.

Two other Toronto hospitals have been looking at this issue. St. Michael's Hospital is currently examining the feasibility of establishing a workplace child care centre for employees. Cost and space are major barriers to such a centre. Women's College Hospital is investigating what child care services are available in the vicinity of the hospital and whether there is demand from employees for workplace child care.

A group of employees working in a Government of Canada building in Toronto conducted a survey of employees which revealed that parents of approximately 60 children were interested in workplace child care. A committee has now been formed and a centre is being planned. The proposed centre would have 40 spaces of which at least 10 would be for infants. Priority would be given to parents working in the building and any remaining spaces would be available to children from the surrounding community. Application has been made for subsidized space and financial support for renovations. The committee expects it will be at least another year before the centre might open.

Although the Jesse Ketchum Nursery Centre is a community based child care centre, approximately one-third of the children at the centre do not live in the area but attend because their parents work in the vicinity. Most day care centres close at 6 p.m. and if parents work until 5:30 or 6 p.m., they cannot return to their communities to pick up their children by closing time. Most centrally located municipal day care centres in Toronto report a significant number of children in attendance whose parents work but do not live in the vicinity.

In some respects, A New Life Centre in Hamilton functions as a workplace day care. It is located on a main route going to the steel plant and is in close proximity to a hospital and a number of restaurants. The centre caters primarily to single parents working in medically related fields or parents working in restaurants. A few parents work at the steel plant. The centre accepts children from 6 weeks to school age and is open 24 hours a day in order to accomodate parents who must work shifts. The Director of the centre, feels the day care serves a profound need for working parents, and is making an attempt to provide comprehensive family services along with child care.

Most universities and community colleges in Ontario have day care centres. In almost all cases, they are open to the children of support staff, students, and faculty and therefore are a form of workplace child care. Those centres established at universities were initiated through student and faculty demands. Those at community colleges were established as student training schools for early childhood education programs. For a comprehensive study

concerning university child care centres in Canada, see E.M. McLeod's, A Study of Child Care Services at Canadian Universities.

Workplace child care in Ontario is not widespread. Few employers provide child care centres for their employees and few provide other child care services and family related benefits.

3. Discussion

There are both advantages and disadvantages to employer-sponsored child care. Where a child care centre is provided by the employer, the employer may experience a reduction in staff turnover, a decrease in tardiness and absenteeism, an improvement in recruiting power, and an improved community image. However, during times of economic restraint, the labour force tends to stabilize of its own accord without incentives such as the provision of child care centres.

Although a growing number of parents see workplace child care as a solution to a pressing need, the majority favour community-based child care. Community-based child care allows a child to develop friendships within his/her own community. If an older child is in school he/she may be able to join a younger brother or sister for lunch and after school activities. Community programs can provide continuity of service for children of different age groups. Since most people must travel some distance in order to work, community child care minimizes transportation problems.

However, many community child care centres open too late in the morning to accommodate children of parents who work in factories. Parents who work in businesses or firms which close at 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. often cannot return to their communities to pick up their children before the regular closing time of 6:00 p.m. In such instances, there is an obvious need for workplace child care.

Parents are able to visit their children during the day if child care is provided at or near the place of work and in some cases, children can gain familiarity with the world of work. Centres located within companies can make use of the facilities of the companies and thereby experience substantial

savings in operating costs.

Industrial sites and company locations may not be conducive to outdoor play because of noise and pollution. Such companies should not consider setting up a centre at the place of work but could involve themselves in alternate child care provisions from which there is a wide range to choose (See section D: Guidelines)

It is argued that workplace child care makes women more vulnerable and socially dependent on the workplace and that the struggle for better working conditions is made more difficult when one's job is directly linked to the care of one's child. The majority of people however, are dependent on their jobs for economic reasons. It makes sense to be tied to one's job for an additional reason which is positive in nature, such as the provision of child care. The provision of employer-sponsored child care centres or other child care provisions is not just a personal benefit to employees but a direct benefit to society as a whole.

The Final Report of the Advisory Council on Day Care, January 1976, stated:

"Business and industry have not been expected to make contributions towards the cost of day care to any marked degree, and yet they benefit the most from having day care available for the children of their employees. We hope that serious thought will be given to the methods of encouraging and stimulating employers to become involved in the day care field, not necessarily as the prime providers, but certainly by providing financial support...by fee supports, joint operation of programs or in-house programs at the place of work in some instances."¹⁴

It went on to recommend tax incentives for firms in this regard. A report of the Project Child Care Policy Task Force, 100,000 Children: Alternatives for Service Delivery, published by the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto in 1979 recommends that "Employers and trade unions become involved in providing day care. At the very least, industry and labour should provide space and equipment for such centres".¹⁵

Like the trade union movement in Britain, the unions in Canada are somewhat wary of employer-sponsored child care. Many within the union movement see

employer-sponsored child care as a stop gap measure which would gain high visibility and provide only lip service to something which should be a basic social right. They view child care as too much of a major problem to be approached in this way. They see the union position regarding child care as that of bargaining with the employer for funds to support community child care.

Both the Ontario Federation of Labour and the Metro Labour Council have developed position papers on child care.

In principle, unions seem to favour legislation which would tax corporations to provide funds for child care. Individual employers could then be bargained with for funds to provide child care benefits or to support community child care.

However, CUPE National, at its annual meeting in 1977, passed a motion supporting day care at the place of employment and in its model agreement issued as a guide to negotiators it has included a clause demanding employer-sponsored day care for its workers.

Metropolitan Toronto has set up a task force to study child care. One of the aspects of child care it is examining is workplace and industry-related child care. In the Information and Bibliography of this subject, it states:

"There is a consensus that the interaction of business and community is essential if the need for day care services for families at all income levels is to be met." 16

The following section D, Guidelines for Employers and Unions, outlines ways in which employers and unions can become involved in the provision of child care.

D: GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYERS AND UNIONS

1. The Employer

Establishments considering setting up day care centres for their employees should first conduct a reliable demand survey in order to establish employee need for child care.*

Next, a feasibility study should look into the realities of the situation: how much would a day care centre cost, would it best serve the child care needs of employees, what have been the experiences in other jurisdictions. It is important to check provincial licensing regulations and guidelines pertaining to child care. Municipal authorities should also be contacted. The study should investigate architectural designs and costs, and program size and content. Personnel requirements and cost of materials, toys and equipment must also be studied. Provincial day care coordinators can offer assistance and expertise in many of these areas.

There are a number of different types of employer-sponsored centres to choose from: 1/ the employer-sponsored centre can be non-profit and function separately from the company, or 2/ it can operate as a proprietary subsidiary of the company. 3/ A number of employers can join together to co-sponsor a centre. 4/ A company can co-sponsor a centre together with a union or a community centre. If a union exists within the company, it is important that it be contacted for support.

Once the feasibility of setting up a centre has been established, a detailed proposal should be drawn up and submitted to management. The proposal should outline cost requirements and discuss the advantages as well as the disadvantages of the centre.

* A number of companies have been "randomly" surveyed as to day care needs. Some concern has been expressed as to the "random" nature of the distribution of such surveys. The conclusion reached by these surveys was that there was no need for a day care centre. However, close examination of the surveys revealed that they had been "randomly" distributed in such a manner that in some departments, they reached only people without children. Caution should be exercised in this regard.

Also, it must be remembered that employees of a company already have day care arrangements which enable them to work. New employees or job applicants may be more in need of child care.

When the proposal is accepted, a board of directors should be set up to establish the policies and principles under which the day care will operate in conjunction with the company. A number of parents should serve on the board and the supervisor or director should work with the board during the initial planning stages.

The next step is the hiring of staff and the enrolment of the children. Since day care centres generally get off to a slow start in terms of enrolment, a number of company-sponsored centres have found it worthwhile to engage in publicity campaigns to "sell" the idea to employees.

Not all employers will find it feasible to set up their own day care centres. Outlined below are a number of options they may wish to choose from.

- 1/ A company can purchase spaces for employee use in existing centres. These centres could be located near the place of work or in local communities. Such monies would guarantee needed support for day care centres and provide a valuable service for employees. Because of a lack of funding, many centres are uncertain of their futures and are forced to spend time looking for funds when they could be more usefully engaged in program planning and quality child care (see Manulife, page 17)
- 2/ A company can provide vouchers to their employees. These vouchers would go toward the purchase of child care services in day care centres or in private homes.
- 3/ A company can offer monthly child care allowances to employees with children (see YWCA, page 18)
- 4/ A company can start a counselling referral service to assist employees in locating satisfactory child care or they can provide access to a child care co-ordinator or consultant. (see Ontario Government, page 16)
- 5/ A company can develop and implement a program involving the training and supervision of child care in family day care homes. (see Ontario Government, page 17)
- 6/ A company can offer guaranteed payments for the cost of child care for employees working over-time.
- 7/ A company can donate its considerable organizational, training and ad-

ministrative expertise to an existing day care centre. It can donate the services of its accountants, lawyers, architect, and public relations people.

8/ A company can donate space, maintenance services, and utilities to a day care centre. The Riverdale Hospital day care centre in Toronto makes use of the hospital's laundry and cafeteria services and its janitorial and carpentry staff.

9/ A company can underwrite or initiate child care research. Initially this could involve the expansion of the functions of the personnel department to include: the simple posting of a list of child care resources; the gathering of data on employees' child care arrangements and an investigation into how best to support such arrangements; or, the analysis of company personnel policies to ascertain to what extent they are family-related (this could include maternity leave and sick days policies and eventually be incorporated into a comprehensive fringe benefit package for child care).

2. Unions

Unions have an equally important role to play in the establishment of day care centres and the support of alternate child care arrangements for their memberships.

They can co-sponsor centres in cooperation with employers (see above) or they can set up their own centres (see Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, page 10) and bargain with employers for contributions to go toward a fund to build a new day care centre or support existing ones.

Unions can bargain for direct negotiated checkoffs to go toward a child care welfare fund. These funds could support a variety of child care arrangements according to the preferences of the memberships. Such funds could be held in trust by such labour-related bodies as the Metro Labour Council and go toward the support of a comprehensive child care system or they could be held by individual memberships to set up their own child care centres or to provide their own child care arrangements.

Unions can include clauses covering employer-sponsored child care in the bargaining agenda and make sure they are treated as priority issues.

Unions can give financial support to groups within the community who are involved in the provision of child care.

Unions have the organizational structure at the local, provincial, and national levels (e.g. Metro Labour Council, Ontario Federation of Labour, and the Canadian Labour Congress) to initiate child care research and press for funds for more and better child care.

Unions have a vital role to play in terms of consciousness raising around child care issues. Women at the local union level can demand payment for babysitting arrangements or that child care be provided for union meetings. This will provide the opportunity for women to take part in the decision-making and policy-making processes within the unions. They can make sure that child care becomes recognized as the vital and crucial issue it is, see to it that it is included on the bargaining table, and ensure that once it is on it, is not dropped.

Appendix A

Child Care Centers Sponsored by Employers and Labour Unions in the United States: A Summary

A Report of the Women's Bureau,
U.S. Department of Labour
1980

In 1978, a survey of employer-sponsored child care centers throughout the United States was conducted. The survey was to gather information which would be useful to employers and unions considering support for employee child care services. The survey examined many issues including:

- identifying centers and sponsors
- examining physical environments
- characterizing organizations and employees
- identifying benefits
- determining problems

This summary outlines briefly the major findings of the survey.

Number of Centers and Enrolments

- 105 civilian centers were identified. They enrolled an estimated 8,419 children. Sponsors included 14 government agencies, 75 hospitals, 9 industries and 7 labour unions.
- 200 centers were located at military installations — 89 sponsored by the Air Force, 50 by the Army, 15 by the Marine Corps and 46 by the Navy. These differed from civilian centers since they operated as a community service and provided care while parents engaged in leisure activities as well as while they worked. 25,059 children were enrolled.
- A decrease was noted in industry and hospital sponsored centres since 1970. No factor was identified as responsible.

Centres

- The average number of years in operation was 13.2. Military and hospital centers had been in operation longest.
- Most civilian centers were located in or close to the employees' workplace. Only 13% were farther than one block from the parents' workplace.
- All centers enrolled children aged 3 to 6. In addition 64% of civilian centers and 97% of military centers enrolled children

under 1 year of age. 34% of civilian centers and 79% of military centers enrolled 6 to 10 year olds.

- In 54.5% of civilian centers, enrollment was restricted to children of employees. 91.2% of children at civilian centers had a parent employed by the sponsor.
- Funding was through a combination of fees and employer subsidies. Only 33% of the employer-sponsored centers reported additional outside funding.
- All centers except one labour union center and one hospital center charged fees.
- Employer subsidies were in three categories: in kind services (e.g. free rent, janitorial services, food services), start-up expenses and operating expenses.

Benefits

Many benefits to employers resulted from the centers. Those mentioned were:

<u>Number of Centers</u>	<u>Benefits</u>
53	Increased ability to attract employees
49	Lower absenteeism
48	Improved employee attitude toward sponsoring organization
40	Improved employee attitude toward work
40	Favorable publicity to employer for articles about center
34	Lower job turnover rate
29	Improved community relations

Closing Employer-Sponsored Centers

Employers who had closed centers were contacted. Reasons given for closing centers were identified as: program costs, unwillingness of employees to pay fees, center not being used by employees, center not needed to attract and keep a steady work force.

New Developments

Since the survey was completed in 1978, six new industry-sponsored centers have opened.

- Albert P. Beutel Day Care Center
 - sponsored by Intermedics, Freeport, Texas
 - opened November, 1979
 - 250 children.
- Living and Learning Corporation (2)
 - began operating centers for Allendale Insurance Company (Rhode Island) and Union Mutual Life (Maine)
 - company leases space from company and provides 10% discount to

- employees
- 90 children at Allendale, 100 children at Union Mutual
- Zales Corporation
 - Dallas, Texas
 - 72 children
- Hoffman La Roche
 - Clifton, New Jersey
 - 40 children
- Broadcasters Child Development Center
 - supported by 5 area T.V. and radio stations
 - Washington D.C.

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